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, *Commissioner*

**COLORADO RIVER COMMISSION  
OF NEVADA**

January 16, 2007

Mr. Dale Hoffman-Floerke  
Department of Water Resources  
Colorado River and Salton Sea Office  
P.O. Box 942836  
Sacramento, CA 94236-0001

RE: Comments on the *Draft Programmatic Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) for the Salton Sea Ecosystem Restoration Program*.

Dear Mr. Hoffman-Floerke:

The Colorado River Commission of Nevada (Commission) would like to thank you for the opportunity to review the above-referenced report, prepared on behalf of the California Resources Agency and the Secretary for Resources by the Department of Water Resources and the Department of Fish and Game, dated October 2006. Although the Commission does not necessarily have an opinion on which of the eight alternatives should be chosen as the Preferred Alternative, we would like to provide the following comments.

From a resource preservation perspective, the Commission fully supports and commends the efforts the California Resources Agency and other participating agencies are taking to develop and identify a preferred alternative for restoration of the Salton Sea ecosystem. Since its formation over 100 years ago, the Salton Sea has become a vital component of the Lower Colorado River Delta system, providing fundamental habitat for a variety of migratory and resident waterbirds, many of which are listed as endangered or threatened. In particular, the Salton Sea provides refuge to the Yuma Clapper Rail, one of the species covered under the Lower Colorado River Multi-Species Conservation Plan (LCR MSCP). The LCR MSCP is a long-term program which seeks compliance with the Endangered Species Act (ESA) for federal and non-federal activities on the Lower Colorado River by engaging in various conservation efforts for endangered as well as threatened species while working toward their recovery. We anticipate that species and habitat conservation actions implemented as a result of the PEIR would benefit species that not only occupy the Salton Sea ecosystem but also the Lower Colorado River ecosystem.

On several occasions prior, the Commission had submitted comments pertaining to the possible use of desalination as a potential component of the Salton Sea Restoration Plan. In particular, the Commission submitted comments (see attachments) pertaining to the use of this technology to desalt hypersaline Salton Sea water which could then be used as replacement water for the Sea or as a revenue-producing water supply for urban areas. The Commission, along with the Southern Nevada Water Authority and its member agencies, has a great interest in desalination and believes the technology could provide multi-state benefits. In our review of the PEIR, we were unable to locate a response specifically addressing this option, and would very much appreciate any additional information on whether or not something of this nature is still being considered, or the reasons otherwise.

The Colorado River Commission of Nevada appreciates the opportunity to review and comment on the *Draft Programmatic Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) for the Salton Sea Ecosystem Restoration Program*. Please feel free to contact our office at (702) 486-2670 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY

George M. Caan  
Executive Director

GMC/NAE/jln

Attachments (2)